United Nations A/C.1/54/PV.1

General Assembly
Fifty-fourth Session

Official Records

First Committee
1st Meeting
Tuesday, 14 September 1999, 5.20 p.m.
New York

Temporary Chairman: Mr. Gurirab . . . . . (Namibia, President of the General Assembly)

The meeting was called to order at 5.20 p.m.

Election of the Chairman of the First Committee

The Temporary Chairman: Rule 103 of the rules of procedure, as amended by Assembly resolution 52/163 of 15 December 1997, provides that each Main Committee shall elect a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. These officers shall be elected on the basis of the equitable geographical distribution, experience and personal competence. The elections shall be held by secret ballot unless the Committee decides otherwise in an election where only one candidate is standing. The nomination of each candidate shall be limited to one speaker, after which the Committee shall immediately proceed to the election.

Furthermore, rule 110 of the rules of procedure provides that congratulations to the officers of a Main Committee shall not be expressed except by the Chairman of the previous session — or, in his absence, by a member of his delegation — after all the officers of the Committee have been elected.

This meeting has been convened for the election of the Chairman of the First Committee. Are there any nominations?

Mr. Adam (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation, on your assumption of the presidency of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

As Chairman of the First Committee, I am pleased to nominate Mr. Raimundo González of Chile for the chairmanship of the First Committee. Ambassador González, a lawyer by training, began his professional career in academia, specializing in space law. That specialization soon led him into the diplomatic world.

In the 1980s, he began representing his country, Chile, at United Nations conferences on the exploration of outer space and participated in many diplomatic forums on space law. He continues to play a very active role in this area. Since 1997 he has been Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. In July of this year, he participated, as Vice-Chairman, in the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III). In 1994, Ambassador González was nominated Ambassador to Romania. Since 1997 he has been Director of the Department of Disarmament and International Security of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Chile, a post that he still occupies. Of course, many representatives here know him very well, as he was Vice-Chairman of the First Committee during the fifty-third session of the General Assembly. In 1998, the Secretary-General of the United Nations nominated him as a member of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

The professional career of Ambassador González, which I have just described briefly, amply justifies his nomination to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I hope that he will be accepted by consensus.

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This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

The Temporary Chairman: Mr. Raimundo González of Chile has been nominated by the representative of Belgium. Since only one candidate has been nominated, I propose that under rule 103 the Committee decide not to hold a secret ballot.

It was so decided.

The Temporary Chairman: I therefore declare Mr. Raimundo González of Chile elected Chairman of the First Committee by acclamation.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.